A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday July 3. 1711.

WHEN in my last I gave a general of the *European* Goods, which were generally Ship'd from the several Countries to *New Spain*, you are desir'd to take it only as a summary Account, to confirm the General I had laid down, *viz.* That the *Spaniards* in *America* are supply'd with their Bulk of all sorts of Goods, fit for Apparrel, Houshold-stuff, and Utensils, Stores, whether Naval or for Land-Service, (and all such Goods as our own Colonies demand of us) *from Europe*: I shall descend to Particulars, when I come to Examin the Exports more nicely to each part.

I am next to observe to you, that from the first Time that the *Spaniards* possess'd this Country till this Time, that is, *till this War*, all these Goods were sent from the several Nations of *Italy*, *France*, *Holland*, *England*, &c. Not immediately to *America*, but first to *Old-Spain*, *viz.* To the Bay of *Cadiz*, that is, to the Towns of *Cadiz*, Port *St. Mary*, &c. Where they are sold to the *Spanish* Merchants, who buying them there, Shipped them again for *America*, to their several Correspondents, whether at *Carthagena*, *Porto-Bello*, *Mexico*, or the like—— So that *Old Spain* was first the great Mart, where all the Goods were first bought

bought and ſold, and from whence, as from one general Magazine, the whole *Spaniſh* Weſt-Indies are ſupply'd.

I need not tell you, that theſe Goods are uſually Ship'd in large Gallions and Galliota's, formerly call'd Carricks and Carvells —— Theſe going at certain Seaſons, are thoſe we call Vulgarly the *Galloons*, the *Flota* and the *Flotilla*, which ſignifies no other than the Great Fleet and the little Fleet; whither theſe Veſſels carry theſe *European* Goods, and what they bring back, is our next Enquiry.

The Fleets from *Europe* go in a Body to the *Havana*, a Harbour, or Port, in the Iſle of *Cuba*; there they ſeparate, and go to three reſpective Ports, *viz. Carthagena*, *La-Vera-Cruz*, and *Porto-Bello*; from theſe Ports they are carried by Land-Carriage to all Parts of *America*; as firſt to *Mexico*, which is the Capital City of the *American* World, and perhaps at this Time, the Richeſt City in the World, of the Wealth, Lazineſs, and Luxury whereof, I could give a very good Account from common Fame, *viz.* Of the Immenſe Quantity of *Pearl* worn by the Ladies. Of *Thirty Thouſand* Coaches, *Three Hundred Thouſand* Servants or Slaves, and Warehouſes pil'd up to the Roofs, with Bags and Bars of Silver, *and in ſhort, of Things Incredible*; but my Buſineſs lies another Way. 2. *To Panama*, on the Shoar of the great *Paciſick* Ocean.

The Trade of *Mexico* is chiefly to ſupply itſelf, *which as before is Monſtrouſly great*, and the Peopled Country thereabout it, where the greateſt Number of *Spaniards* now inhabit, where it is for many Miles round very Populous, and generally ſpeaking ſo *Rich*, that if I ſhould give you ſome Accounts I have ſeen and heard from People who have been there, it would tell ſo like a Romance, that I care not to hand ſuch Stories forward which ſo few would believe ——*It is true*, the Number of *Spaniards* in the City of *Mexico* is not reckned ſo great, compar'd to the Extent and Dimenſions of the City; ſome have reckned them at 160000, others at 200000, but in theſe, muſt be reckned ſuch as are born there of the *Spaniards* and *Indians*, and of whom tho' many of them are very Rich, the Original *Spaniards* make little Account; yet they reckon a Million of People in *Mexico* in all, tho' I ſuppoſe they over reckon it by very much.

The Trade of *Panama* is by Sea along the Coaſt to *Lima* in *Peru*, and to St. *Jago* and *Villa Rica* in *Chili*, ſupplying the Coaſt for the ſpace of three Thouſand Miles; from hence comes the Gold of *Chili* and the Silver of *Potoſi* and *La Plata*, Things too immenſe to talk of, but which I ſhall deſcribe in their Courſe: In this Tract are many fine Cities, flouriſhing Kingdoms, and a produce of Wealth ——And this is what they call the SOUTH-SEAS ——. From the Shoar in the Gulph of *Mexico* about *Porto Bello*, where the Ships come and the Goods are Landed, to *Panama*, on the Shoar of the *South Seas*, croſs the *Iſthmus*, is not above 60 Miles by Land; this is what they call the *Iſthmus* of *Darien*, which joins North and South *America* together, and is but few Leagues North of *Darien*, where our Brethren of *Scotland* fix'd a Colony, which if we had Encourag'd, might by this Time have been an excellent Footing for the *South-Sea* Trade; but *Tangeir*, *Dunkirk*, and *Darien* are Loſſes *England* has felt enough, and can perhaps never be retriev'd, of which in its courſe; and of the true Original of the Loſs of *Darien*, I may ſay ſomething which few People yet know.

This is the Trade to the SOUTH-SEAS, the ſame which we are now going in Hand with, and which a new Society is Erecting to carry on; How it is to be carried on—how beſt to Advantage, and how both with Safety and Succeſs, will come to be diſcourſed of in its Turn; how it may Miſcarry, what probable Hazards and Difficulties are before us in it, may alſo be laid down plainer than ſome People expect, for I promis'd to Treat this Cauſe with Impartiality, without Fear or Favour for one Side or other, I ſhall not fail to do ſo.

But I muſt firſt Examin the Return of this Great Trade, and the particular Advantageous Import from this great Country to *Europe* ——How, and in what, they make good to *Europe* the vaſt Demand they

make

make for our *European* Goods, and wherein the Profit lies of this great Trade; for without Queſtion it is the moſt Gainful Trade in the World.

The great Return from *New Spain*, and which the Gallions aforeſaid are generally Loaden with, is,

Firſt, PLATE or Silver, in *Bullion*; this is brought in Coin'd, Stamp'd Money, which is call'd Pieces of Eight, or Bars of Silver; theſe come from every part, but chiefly from *Mexico* and *Peru*; that from *Mexico* is brought to *La vera Cruz* or *Panuco*, in the Gulph; that from *Peru* is brought firſt to *Panama* by Sea, then to *Portobello* by Land, and this is brought over in ſo great Quantity, that one Ship has been ordinarily known to bring into *Cadiz* above 400 Tun Weight of Silver, beſides other Goods, and *they ſay at Cadiz*, that a Great Carrick or Carvell, in K. *Philip* II. Time, which they call'd the *Madre de Deos*, afterwards taken or burnt by the *Engliſh*, being a Ship of two Thouſand Tun, brought into *Spain* 6 Millions of Pieces of Eight in Silver, and a Tun of Gold, which was an Immenſe ſum; it is true they come in ſmaller Ships now, yet ſome of the Galleons that uſe that Trade now, are of 700, 800, and 1000 Tun Burthen, and the laſt Flotilla which was but ſix Ships, brought Home the Value of 11 Millions of Pieces of Eight, as by the Account I have ſeen appears, whereof above ſix Millions in Bullion, and of that above 2 Millions for the King's Account.

2dly, The next Thing of Value in their Return, is the Cochineal, of which, in one Fleet of the Galleons I remember there came ſoon after the begining of the laſt War, very near 200000*l.* Value.

Indico is another very Valuable Thing they ſend, and the Quantity very great; I think I remember three Thouſand Quintals to have come in one Fleet.

Cocoa, Snuff, and very many Valuable Drugs, as the *Peruvian Bark* in particular, and Valuable Gums, and Dyers Wood, and Earths.

Pearl, formerly in much greater Quantity than now.

Jewels, ſuch as Diamonds and Emralds in eſpecial manner.

Sugar, This they can bring in great Quantity, but they eſteem it too mean a Return.

Let any Man Judge, whether a Trade which brings back ſuch a Return as this, can be an Unprofitable Trade; but of this alſo more hereafter.

The *Spaniards* in *America* have but two Trades with any Port of the World, this Trade of *Old Spain* excepted; and this is a Trade from *Acapulco* in the Empire of *Mexico*, to the *Eaſt-Indies*, to the *Philippine* Iſlands and *Japan*; this Trade is carried on chiefly by about four Ships, who ſet out from *Acapulco* Yearly, one every Year, and croſſing thoſe vaſt Seas which they call the *Pacifick*, or which the *Dutch* call *Mare del Zur*, they come to the *Philippines* in the *Eaſt-Indies* to *Japan*, and ſo on to *China*; from hence they bring to *Mexico* a vaſt Treaſure in Spices, Coffee, Tea, Silks, Callicoes, and all kinds of *Eaſt-India* Goods, which adds to the Glory of the City of *Mexico*, which boaſts of having their Houſes ſet with *China* Ware, and their Chambers hung with *Japan* Pictures, above any Place in the Chriſtian World; for all which they carry out nothing but ready Money.

The other Trade is that for *Negroes* to the Coaſt of *Africa*, which is now carried on by the *French*, was formerly by the *Portugueſe*, and might have been by us, if we had underſtood our own Intereſt; this is that they call the *Aſſiento*, or permiſſion Trade, becauſe they permit the Ships with *Negroes* to Trade thither, when all others are Prohibit.

This

Thus you have a Scheme of their Trade in General; How the Law of Commerce mention'd before, has been broken; how the *French* came to get into this Trade, like the *Saxons* into *England*, and how we may come to the same Advantage, remains for our next.

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